

# PYRAMID STATE PARK – CLEAR LAKE



## 2023 FISHERIES STATUS SUMMARY

**LOCATION:** Pyramid State Park is located south of Pinckneyville in Perry County. To reach Clear Lake, head west on Galum Church Road from State Route 127, then turn south onto Pyramid Park Road.

**DESCRIPTION:** Clear Lake is a 12-acre strip mine lake that has existed since the 1950s. There is a gravel boat launch and dock, in addition to a camping area next to the lake.

**STATUS OF THE SPORT FISHERY** – The following is a summary of the major sport fish species based on fish population surveys conducted by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. Fisheries surveys conducted during 2022 consisted of a nocturnal spring electrofishing survey and fall netting survey.

**Largemouth Bass** – The Largemouth Bass population in Clear Lake appears to be truncated, with an abundance of small fish under 12 inches and relatively few large fish. A total of 20 bass (171/hour) were collected during the electrofishing survey. The mean relative weight of all bass in the sample was poor at 86 and did not exceed the goal of 90 among any size classes. Although bass growth appears to be limited in Clear Lake, the primary management goal is to create a quality fishery for Bluegill and Redear with ample numbers of fish  $\geq 8$  inches. Therefore, improving bass size structure is not a management concern.

**Bluegill and Redear Sunfish** – A total of 27 Bluegill (231/hour) and 8 Redear (69/hour) were collected during spring electrofishing. The lake contains an abundance of Bluegill in the 7”-7.9” range and some Redear over 8 inches. However, no Bluegill exceeded 8 inches in length. Mean relative weight of all Bluegill was 87, below the goal of 90. Mean relative weights declined after Bluegill reached 7 inches in length but rebounded slightly at 7.5 inches. Clear Lake appears to be on the cusp of growing numbers of 8-inch Bluegills, which are often sought by panfish anglers. Unlike many other lakes within Pyramid, Clear Lake does not appear to harbor Gizzard Shad, meaning that Bluegill growth potential should be relatively high. Bluegill and Redear growth may increase if herbicide treatments are performed to reduce the density of aquatic plants in the lake, which make it more difficult for bass to thin the Bluegill population. If adequate herbicide can be obtained, treatments will begin during 2023.

**Black Crappie** – Only one 9.6-inch Black Crappie was collected during the 2022 survey. Much of Clear Lake is very steep-sided and difficult to sample with trap nets. Angler reports indicate the lake harbors a decent fishery.

**Channel Catfish** – Given the small size of Clear Lake, it is unlikely that Channel Catfish recruit naturally. Therefore, Channel Catfish have been stocked annually since 2020. Four Channel Catfish were collected in fall-set experimental gill nets. Catfish ranged in size from 14-19 inches. Abundance and size structure should continue to improve as older age classes become established.

### Fishing regulations:

Species	Creel Limit	Minimum Length Limit
Largemouth Bass	5 under 14” and 1 over 18”	14-18 inch protected slot (no possession)
Channel Catfish	6	None
All Fish	2 Pole and Line Fishing Only	

**RECREATIONAL USE RESTRICTIONS** –There are no boat motor restrictions at this lake but the entire lake is a “NO WAKE ZONE” and all sizes of boat motors must operate at no-wake speed.

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